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East End Community Center

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Monday, March 26, 2012

East End Community Center

Stephanie

Last Wednesday, some of the River Stewards were given the opportunity to visit East End Community Center to present to an after school program there. After weeks of planning and rescheduling, 7 Stews from the 2014 cohort piled into the van and headed to East End. The group of about 25 students greeted us with enthusiasm and excitement to hear from college students about the aquifer and the City of Dayton.

We began by introducing ourselves to the kids, telling them a little bit about what we did in River Stewards, and giving them an overview of what we were going to talk about while we were there. After the introductions, we jumped right into our activities for the afternoon. First on the list was the gallon game. We split the group into five teams and had them guess how many gallons of water were required for everyday activities such as brushing teeth, washing clothes, taking a shower, etc. For the most part, most of the students had a good sense of how much water was necessary for each daily activity. Next, we built an aquifer model in a fish tank using sand, rocks, clay, felt, and water. Just as in the last activity, we wanted to gain a sense of how much they already knew about aquifers. Some students had a broken understanding of what they were, others had no clue. When asked what an aquifer was, we received answers such as "something that lives underground," "an underwater animal," "a kind of river," and "a big filter." We then explained to them in more detail what exactly aquifers are, why they are beneficial, and how Dayton has the Great Miami Buried Valley Aquifer. We also showed them how pollution affects the aquifer and our rivers by using food coloring to "pollute" the model. All of the students enthusiastically participated in the demonstration and had great questions to ask.

To reiterate everything we had just discussed, we built another aquifer model. But rather than using rocks, we used ice cream. Each student built their own model and as we gave them each layer, they told us what they thought it represented. This was definitely their favorite part of our presentation. After they were finished with their ice cream and the sugar-rush kicked in, it was a bit more difficult to keep them interested in the last activities, but with some patience, the interactive timeline and map of Dayton wrapped up the program.

It was a great experience working with the kids at East End. We all enjoyed listening to their questions, watching their understanding of their surroundings grow, and sharing our love for our environment.

